

REMARKS**Status the claims**

Claims 1-6 have been cancelled and new claims 7-9 have been added. New claims 7-9 represent original claims 3-5, written in independent form. As such, no new matter has been added by these claims and no new issues have been raised for consideration. Entry thereof is therefore respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 2 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over Garner et al. in view of Vermeersch (EP '494). The Examiner further indicates that claims 3-5 are objected to, but would be allowable if re-written in independent form. Claims 3-5 have been re-written as suggested by the Examiner and presented as new claims 7-9. In addition, the subject matter of claims 1, 2 and 6 has been cancelled, thus rendering the rejection moot.

As all outstanding rejections and objections have been addressed and overcome, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions regarding the instant application he is requested to please contact the undersigned.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Dated: 09-May-2004

Respectfully submitted,

By ma

MaryAnne Armstrong, Ph.D.

Registration No.: 40,069

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant